

REMARKS

Claims 1-42 are currently pending in the application. The Examiner rejected claims 1-42 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over "Data-Over-Cable Service Interface Specifications" by Cable Television Laboratories, Inc. (DOCSIS) in view of US Patent No. 6,643,295 (Nose).

The independent claims 1, 17, 34, 43, and 48 have been amended. Amendments to the independent claims include broadening as well as clarifying amendments. The independent claims are believed allowable over the cited art for a variety of reasons. For example, the independent claims now variably recite determining an optimized lookahead time and switching between the optimized lookahead time and a relaxed lookahead time.

The amendments are supported on page 21, lines 15-17. More specifically, a head end can be configured to "periodically switch between a "relaxed" lookahead time (based on the worst case propagation delay scenario) and an "optimized" lookahead time (based on the LAT optimization technique described in this application)."

Neither DOCSIS nor Nose teach or suggest switching between the optimized lookahead time and the relaxed lookahead time. According to various embodiments, switching can be used used to address a particular situation. That is, "a situation could arise where the LAT value for the upstream channel is less than the overall delay associated with generating, transmitting, and processing a MAP message at the new cable modem. Accordingly, in this situation, the new cable modem may receive MAP messages which have expired start allocation times. Since conventional cable modems are configured to discard MAP messages which have an expired start allocation time, the new cable modem will be unable to access the CMTS via the upstream channel since, in order to gain access to the CMTS, the new cable modem must receive a valid MAP message (having a non-expired start allocation time) which includes an initial ranging slot allocation. Thus, if the new cable modem is unable to perform an initial ranging procedure with the CMTS, it will be unable to access the Head End using this upstream channel." (page 21, lines 3-10)

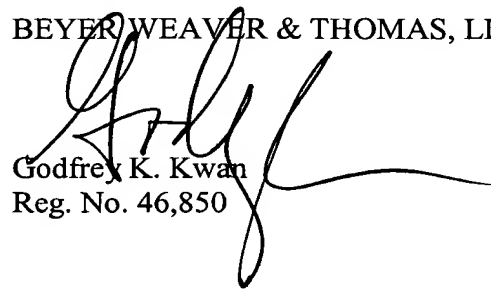
According to various embodiments, switching between a relaxed lookahead time and an

optimized lookahead time allows a new cable modem to communicate with a headend. Neither DOCSIS nor Nose teach or suggest switching between an optimized and a relaxed lookahead time. However, it should be noted that the claims merely recite switching, as switching can be used for a variety of reasons to address a number of issues.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all rejections to the independent claims have been overcome thereby placing all independent and dependent claims now pending in this application in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at (510) 843-6200.

Respectfully submitted,

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